



The Silk Roads: An Illustrated New History of the World

Peter Frankopan

Neil Packer, Illustrator

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To be ten in America is to be mystified—the world is so complicated, tension-filled, callous, and distressing that the allure of a virtual life on a screen is nearly impossible to resist. What can we do for that child? What tools can we provide to help her find her place, her identity?

Certainly one of the most effective ways to understand today's world, and even to peek into the future, is to look back. By studying the people and places of ancient and not-so-distant times, it is possible to make connections, so as to better understand how everything fits together.

Peter Frankopan's *The Silk Roads: An Illustrated New History of the World* is the beautifully rendered retelling of his masterpiece, *The Silk Roads*, albeit for children ten and up. The connections he secures between religion, trade, disease, war, science, and calamity underpin the success of this project, which is further enhanced by his rare storytelling skills and writing chops.

Not to be outdone, Neil Packer's splendid illustrations are often accompanied by helpful captions, fascinating little snippets of lore, and insights to leaven Frankopan's text.

The fact that so many people escape childhood without a real passion for history is more a fault of the lackluster storytelling skills of contemporary historians. The team of Frankopan and Packer are the exception extraordinaire.

MATT SUTHERLAND (January/February 2019)

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